

The Schemer

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Greetings, fellow Diplomat. You're looking at yet another change in TS. It must seem like I've got ants in my pants. Not one of my issues have looked alike, so to keep with the tradition, here's #4. I must end this continual changing, though, and this is the issue to do it. This is the style for all future issues. Let me hear what you think about this change.

And since I've got an enormous rest of the page, I'll risk boring you by going into some 'behind-the-scenes' stuff.

You see, it all started in March of this year. I decided that I wanted to publish. First, I had to decide what it would cost me. For some ~~other~~ strange reason, I thought that I would make money. Maybe all starting pubbers think this. Well, to make a long story short, I found out what it would cost me to produce a 12 page zine and make 40 copies. Then I divided this cost to get what each issue would cost me. I then checked out what the 'average' zine cost, so I could figure up what I would charge. Yipes! I would lose a fortune! No matter what I did, I couldn't lower this cost. So, I decided to wait. I was determined that once I started publishing, I would not fold.

Instead of starting and surviving (and then folding in two or three issues), I had to make sure that I had the means to keep a publication going. When I did, I moved on to my next problem--cost reduction.

The place where my father worked had a copier. 'My problems are over' I thought. I'd just give the material to him and I'd have a low-cost zine. So, I went to the print shop and put in an order for 250 copies of this letterhead. I reviewed all the zines that I had received and found that Phil Fry's Field of Fire was the best design for me. I gave them my \$18 and this letterhead was mine. When I had finished typing up my first one, the strangest thought entered my mind. (If a thought entered my mind, it had to be strange, right?) My father might have other things to do at work than making 120+ copies for me. So, I offered myself the congrats for buying 18 bucks worth of paper.

Then came the stencil idea, which I used for everything except the cover of #3. They were cheap, but looked it. I couldn't print art or comix, either, so I looked for a better way (without spending 20¢ a copy at the shop). Well, I found it, but I don't have room to tell you more. I just hope you like it. Let me hear from you. Until next time, take care.



S O U T H E R N S A S S

a column of hobby news, world activities, and other writings...

In a recent Brutus Bulletin, John Michalski comments on this nations military. John makes some very true statements--the Administration has two fires to put out (we need more ships and planes and tanks but we also need more manpower ((and womanpower for you nitpickers)) to run the things that we already have.) ; the military needs a draft and it's only a matter of time before we get it; and the soldier's pay is wrong. John says that there's no reason to pay a staff sergeant \$14,000 a year or a 'boot' \$9,000. I quote John "The draftees can do just fine with \$60 a month taxfree, and a bunk in the barracks. Of course, they can't make their car insurance payment with that, let alone buy that TransAM and run it, but then, there is no reason they need one for serving either. The \$60 will get them busfare to town for an occasional movie or pizza or a few beers, altho you can get all that cheaper on base. If they'd prefer a big housing allowance to live in an apartment offbase, that's fine, but it's also too bad. They're not in the service to dabble at soldiering while leading the good life, they're there to serve."

I think John Made some good points but he failed to distinguish whether he meant the same things for the volunteer force as well. If he does, then that is where we disagree. The volunteer soldier is there for another reason. Whether he's using the military as a stepping stone, maybe it's his career, or maybe he just can't do anything else. That's not the point. What is the point is that he's a volunteer; he's there on his own free will. The drafted soldier has no choice; the volunteer ~~does~~ did. He should be paid competitively with civilian life. Sure, he shouldn't get as much, because he gets his food, lodging, clothes, etc. paid for. But there is no reason whatsoever to pay an electronics officer aboard an aircraft carrier \$8,500 a year to keep our most expensive plane flying and make him live in a shoe box to-boot. What he's going to do is come into the Navy, serve his term, and go out into the world to find a job and make 3 or 4 times what he made in the Navy. What we need are career soldiers. The constant training that our command must do (because we can't keep skilled people in) is ridiculous. Yet it's what our armed forces live with every day.

I'll stop now and finish this episode next issue. Meanwhile, I hope John will respond. Let The Schemer hear from you. What do you think? Send your suitable-for-print letters or comments in to TS. Your views are very important and I'd like to hear from you.

The Schemer is a monthly (soon to be bi-monthly) publication which

sells for \$4.50 for 12. (615-684-8265) That's my number if you want to call.

Dave Manuel (publisher of The Chamber) is sponsoring a 'Zine Quality Poll' and he says that you should rate the zines you receive from '0' (to '10' (fantastic). Note that this poll is for the quality of print (no content) and clearness of writing (but not literary talent). C'mon, people Give Dave your support! Send your ratings to Dave at 10318 Oakgate, Bellflower, CA 90706. While you're at it, send him a stamp and ask for a sample of The Chamber. I think there may be a few freebie's left there, too.

Dave is also starting a 'Junior Diplomacy League' with all members being under the age of 21. As this is real new, my details are still sketchy. If this idea sounds good to you (and you qualify) drop him a line and find out more about this.

Along the lines of younger Dippy people, Steve Shaddix (head-man of the White Duke) would like to get an association of young publishers. I also know very little about this, so if you are a young publisher, write him at 5486 Butano Way, Rocklin, CA 95677. Steve will be moving in about mid-August, and his new address will be Rt.9 Box 389, Gulfport, MS 39501. All the information should be in TWD #6, which he'll put out before he bugs out.

I've learned that the new Diplomacy sets are out. You may have heard that they contain plastic pieces, to replace the wooden ones. I thought plastic blocks wouldn't be too bad (though not as good as wood, either). What is bad is the plastic pieces aren't blocks--armies are plastic stars and fleets are plastic anchors. The pieces are 3mm high and 1cm wide. I think it's disgusting! I hear that Avalon Hill got a bunch of the wooden pieces when they bought the game. They'd planned to use plastic pieces when the wooden pieces were used up. It seems they were just used up now. AH has wasted no time in replentishing the market with these sets. The bad part is that the boxes are identical, so there is no way to tell them apart.

If you do not care for these sets, and are as outraged as I am, drop AH a postcard and tell them how mad you are. Who knows; maybe they'll stop this.



The Novice Publisher

By David Manuel

The novice publisher's life is not one ideal to the people in the Hobby.

I know firsthand how they feel--the money problems, the criticism they take, and the other new problems they take in as soon as they commit themselves to publishing.

But once that pubber starts publishing for a good long time (about 15 issues), they have, in my opinion, developed a style or way of publishing which his or her subscribers would become familiar with.

Back to the beginning. It is hell getting used to stapling, folding, writing out addresses, keeping everything in order, etc. It is not profitable (as far as money-making), so why do it, right?

Well, to me, it is extremely enjoyable, fun, and the self-satisfaction is GREAT. For a while anyways, I'm still a novice publisher, so I can't go on with this. But if you have the money, the time, and the patience, you too would make a fantastic publisher. At least, those are the basic qualities you'll need to start.

D.M.

And to add to that...

How the Novice Pubber Survives

By S.D.

The novice publisher is the most influential creature on earth. He usually knows not his rear from an opening in the soil. He doesn't know the demands of publishing. All he does know is that he loves Diplomacy and the idea of having his name known is attractive. He's seen several other zines and he probably contacts them. What these established pubbers tell him is very important. The novice is liable to find that few publishers agree with each other on most things. If one guy says this and another says that, what does the novice do? The novice is stuck between wanting help and wanting to do his own thing, but not knowing how. So he does a mix of both, and gets hit with flak from someone(s). Suddenly, everyone is an expert on publishing.

of f o l d Between his first and second issues, the blues hit him. Thoughts enter his mind. He is a sensitive guy, and he doesn't like to be criticized. Either his house rules aren't good enough, he can't write well enough, or his zine just sucks. If he can't take this flak, he sinks. If he gets few or no subbers, he is further disheartened. Yet if he sticks with it, he'll put out another couple. At this time, reality starts to talk. He realizes that he's shelling

(cont. next page)

out big bucks just to be ridiculed and bitched at. If he's lucky enough to have gotten a few trades and kind words, these help him. But the impending doom seems ominous. If he folds, he'll fold before his fifth issue. (If he folds later, it's not from being a novice.)

Yet, if our little novice has the stick-to-it-iveness to take his shots, he'll probably make it. The hobby is hard, and it demands a hard publisher. If the pubber can't measure up, he goes out fast. Kids (oh, how I despise that word) grow up fast. All this goes on until the novice establishes himself and his zine. When he does, he takes criticism in stride. Harsh or overly-suggestive letters from bigshots don't hurt. He uses these letters to try to improve his zine. And, he's never scared to tell the advisor where to go and what to do. The novice is F R E E ! ! ! He has made it into the ranks of the established hobby members. Now, it is the ex-novice's turn to find some young punk and criticize the hell out of him! And our story starts anew...

((Thanks, Dave, for your article. You brought out a lot of good points. Let's hope we helped any potential publisher out there realize that entering the hobby-publishing world isn't just as easy as buying stamps and finding a Xerox machine. Hopefully, we pointed out that, for some, it is worth all the fuss. Thanks again, Dave, and keep up the good work on TC. I wish you'd quit dragging your butt, though!))

TS Need-a-game/zine column... (Zines and people that I personally recommend.)

The Chamber; produced by a 'kid' who knows his ~~shiz~~ business; you can count on this guy to be prompt and efficient; offers Dip; subs are 10 issues for \$5.00; Dave Manuel, 10318 Oakgate, Bellflower, CA 90706.

Field of Fire; produced by a less-than-perfect gentleman (aren't we all?) who sometimes is late but who's gamemastering skills are excellent; offers Dip, Origins, Dune, and Starmada (a multi-player space game; it's free, and I highly recommend it). Game fees are cheap and so is the subscription. This is a 'games only' zine, but is one I enjoy. Phil C. Fry, 5183 S. Gravenstein, Salt Lake City, UT 84107.

The White Duke; this zine offers a lot and is very appealing to the eye; don't be fooled by what you might have heard--this guy is on the stick, too; offers Diplomacy, Origins, WS&IM, and Afrika Korps (starting others soon); subs are \$5.25 for 12; (please take note of new address) Steve Shaddix, Rt.9 Box 389, Gulfport, MS 39501.

Games Pending......~~000###\$\$\$***++&&&%%~~==

Diplomacy One (Elephant); Steve McBee, Dave Manuel, Bert Schoose, Greg Fritz, Whitt Pond

Diplomacy Two (Tiger); Naturally, if the first one isn't yet filled, this one isn't, right? Right...

Diplomacy PBO (Cromwell); Steve Duke, Dave Manuel, Steve Shaddix, John Caruso, Mike Maston, Phil Fry, John Daly.
READY TO START!!!

Dip PBO player's addresses and country assignments:

Austria- Phil Fry, 5183 S. Gravenstein, Salt Lake City, UT 84107;
Phil publishes Field of Fire.

England-John Caruso (Whitestonia), 160-02 43rd Ave. 2nd Floor, Flushing, NY 11358. (212) 353-9695.

France- John Daly (The Dogs of War), Rt.2 Box 136-M5, Rockwell, NC 28138. (704) 857-1555.

Germany- Mike Maston (Xenogotic), P.O.Box 8416, San Diego, CA 92102.

Italy- Steve Duke (The Schemer), Rt.3 Fairfield Pike, Shelbyville, TN 37160. (615) 684-8265.

Russia- Steve Shaddix (The White Duke), 216 Roberts, Long Beach, MS 39560.

Turkey- Dave Manuel (The Chamber), 10318 Oakgate, Bellflower, CA 90706. (213) 867-4140.

Attention PBO Players: Your GM's address and name is Steve McBee, Rt.1 Box 214, Normandy, TN 37360. (615) 857-3131.

This game allows no black press, but all other presses are allowed. Vote on seperation of seasons (Winter and Spring); No Vote Received counts as a 'No' vote. Deadline for Spring 1901 is Tuesday, Aug. 25.

Origins One; Phil Fry. Needs 4 more.

Machiavelli One; Greg Fritz. Needs 5 more; Scenario played will be 'Struggle for Dominance' and only the basic game rules will be used.

PLAY STARMADA!!! Would you like to play an exciting space game that plays by mail? Multi-player excitement is yours if you enter a game. No game fees! For more info, write Phil Fry (address above). You won't regret it. Tell him The Schemer sent you...

Here I am, at the bottom of the page, but with enough space left that I can't just go to another page. What should I do? I suppose I could say a bunch of filler, just to use the page up. But I wouldn't do that.

The Southern Diplomat

by Steven Duke

The southern dippy player must be patient. Many parts of the country (or rather, people in many parts of the country) are bigoted toward the south. Southern people are thought to be slow, dull, and we are known for being naive. Well, this is one southerner to many northerners (I refuse to use the word 'Yankee') saying that those things aren't entirely true.

A friend of mine (no names, but he lives in Bellflower California) told me (not to be rude) that other parts of the country view the south as being about 20 years behind the rest of the country. I really don't understand this, if it is indeed true. Sure, the south is open territory; there are a lot of 'old-timers' out here; farming is still the #1 business; many of us talk with an accent. But if one would like to have a taste of civilization or 'technology', one only has to travel to Nashville, or Knoxville, or Chattanooga. Believe me, though; these places aren't what I would call civilized. I've been to down-town Nashville only once, and once was too much. Oh, the buildings were impressive, the air was interesting, but it was just as though nobody knew what they were doing. A ratrace, if you would. To put it mildly, Nashville scared the hell out of me. The city was so cold, compared to what I knew. If that area is where the south is supposed to be behind, I think we're ahead of the rest of the country.

Now, mind you, I know how frustrating it is to look outside your window and see trees and hills, and taking a deep breath doesn't make you gag from smog. But, such is one of the drawbacks for living in this area.

This article was meant to be a story of bigotry towards the southern dippy player. And so it shall. Anytime a southern player is in a dip game with northerners and people from the west coast, the rebel player feels out on a limb. I'm not sure if the other players get together and say 'let's get that southerner', though I doubt this. Regardless, though, the southerner is lonely. Why, you don't know how fast I scramble to join forces with a player who's from Mississippi or Alabama, or Virginia. A southern alliance is a strong one.

I find fellow southerner's no more naive than Californians or New Yorker's. In fact, it's often a favorite trick of mine to play the dumb southerner in a game, when a fast-talking ~~Yankee~~ person comes along. If the other players think I'm stupid, I usually do well. If not, I have to rely on my southern intuition to help, for I have no advantage over the other players.

Being a southerner isn't anything to be ashamed of. On the contrary--being from the south is something to be proud of. Sure, our way of life is different from the northerners and the mid-westerners and the west coast people. But isn't that true of every part of the country? We are all different, and our country reflects our differences. What makes us great is our unity. We are still one nation, but this nation is made up of many different people. That is not a weakness. Nae, it's a great strength. (You may now stand and kiss the flag...)

Just give me France or Italy or Turkey in a game, and I'll be fine. I'll hold my own against the best ~~Yankee~~ other player. Just don't call them damn revenooer's to take my still away from me! If youse gets any closer, y'can look for both barrels up yourn @#*%&!!@*+&#!!! to, if'n ya ain't keerful...

A Letter to THE SCHEMER...

From Larry Peery (of Xenogogic): "Received your copy of TS and your letter. We are both new zines, mine just happens to be 14 years older than yours. I had 7 good years, starting in 1967, and then 7 years of drought (if you consider the production of An Introduction to the Strategy and Tactics of Postal Diplomacy a famine work), during which I was mostly quiet. Now things are picking up. Eventually, there will be a monthly supplement ((Xeno is a quarterly zine.)) to Xeno which will carry the games. When that starts, you'll receive it also.

Since Mike is the publisher of this nonsense you can sign him up for your games. I won't help him but I may contribute a press release at times, depending on what happens. You can list him as the player or both of us, doesn't matter. I'm committed to playing in a Dot Happy game and that and my Jihad game are going to be it for a while. As you can see, I've got alot of work lined up.

Obviously, I have used a totally different system for setting up my games, but you are welcome in any that appeal to you.

I'm glad the IDHF ((Diplomacy Hall of Fame)) idea appeals to you. Now tell me why it appeals to you and what problems to overcome you see. I'm trying to be careful and give everybody an opportunity to have their say before I do anything. And being new is not necessarily a handicap.

Do you play football? God you must be gigantic! Sometime I will tell you about my trip through Tennessee.

I liked the zine. I consider myself rather unique in Dippy since nobody except Boardman predates me as a publisher and yet I'm also a member of the Class of '81. Gives me a double-vision perspective.

Don't expect to hear too much from Mike. He hates to write and if he does it will probably be in Chinese, Hebrew, or one of his other esoteric languages.

Anyway, good luck with your zine and I hope to hear from you whenever you feel the urge to write. Best of luck.

